

EPA Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

Springfield, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA awarded the City of Springfield supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot and additional funding for assessments at brownfields properties to be used for greenspace purposes. Springfield, with a population of 156,983, saw its labor force decline by almost one-third in the 1980s. The city has a federally designated Enterprise Community (EC) and a commonwealth Economic Target Area (ETA). The poverty rate in the EC is 40 percent, twice the rate in Springfield and four times the commonwealth's rate. The city has a limited amount of vacant industrial space, which tends to be older, environmentally contaminated, and incompatible with modern industrial processes. These conditions have an adverse impact on adjacent residential communities.

Springfield established its own Brownfields Redevelopment Program in 1995 as a core element of its overall economic strategy. Since the initial EPA Pilot grant in 1998, the inventory of brownfields that are ready for assessment has grown to 11 properties that are located in four major planning areas of the city—Carew-Bond-Patton, Taylor Worthington, Brightwood, and Indian Orchard (the first three are

PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Springfield,
Massachusetts*

Date of Announcement:
March 2000

Amount: \$150,000
Greenspace: \$50,000

Profile: The Pilot will target more than a dozen brownfields, most of which are located in the city's federally designated Enterprise Community, including a plan for openspace creation at the Rebecca M. Johnson School site.

Contacts:

Office of Planning
City of Springfield
(413) 787-6020

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 1
(617) 918-1209

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnfl/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

located in the EC). The majority of these properties are adjacent to one another, allowing the city to assemble a large site for redevelopment.

In addition, the Pilot will use its greenspace funding to target the Rebecca M. Johnson School area located in the Mason Square Urban Renewal District within the EC. The Johnson school project area is already the product of redevelopment successes. Formerly a brownfield, new construction has converted the blighted area into a community service center with a new school, health clinic, day care center, and fire station. Creation of much needed open space in the neighborhood will further enhance these revitalization efforts.

OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Springfield's objective is to promote sustainable economic development, address environmental issues in densely populated areas, and give its residents a healthy place to live and work. The Pilot will use the supplemental assistance to continue work initiated under the original Pilot and to begin work on new target areas, working to acquire those properties still under private ownership. Using the targeted properties, the city will place an emphasis on expanding the capacity of the community to participate in and understand the process of brownfields assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment.

In conjunction with the city's Open Space Plan, the Pilot will use the greenspace funding to conduct assessments that will facilitate creation of open space at four properties within the Johnson School site. Potential reuse options to be determined through public participation and school/community needs include a playground, rail/trail way, and passive open space.

To accomplish these objectives, the Pilot plans to:

- Conduct Phase I environmental assessments at 10 properties located within the four major planning areas;
- Conduct Phase II environmental assessments, as needed, at approximately five properties;

- Develop a city-wide brownfields inventory that links a property database to a Geographic Information System (GIS);
- Conduct environmental assessments at four sites within the Johnson School property;
- Develop flow-of-ownership and open space reuse plans for the assessed Johnson School property; and
- Engage the community in the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment process for the targeted properties.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.